

U.S. Department of Education
2012 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program
A Non-Public School - 12PV231

School Type (Public Schools): ☐ Charter ☐ Title 1 ☐ Magnet ☒ Choice
(Check all that apply, if any)

Name of Principal: Dr. Laura Koehl

Official School Name: Notre Dame Academy

School Mailing Address: 1699 Hilton Drive
Park Hills, KY 41011-2796

County: Kenton State School Code Number*: na

Telephone: (859) 261-4300 E-mail: koehl@ndapandas.org

Fax: (859) 292-7722 Web site/URL: www.ndapandas.org

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I - Eligibility Certification), and certify that to the best of my knowledge all information is accurate.

(Principal's Signature) Date _____

Name of Superintendent*: Mr. Michael Clines Superintendent e-mail: mclines@covingtondiocese.org

District Name: Diocese of Covington District Phone: (859) 392-1530

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I - Eligibility Certification), and certify that to the best of my knowledge it is accurate.

(Superintendent's Signature) Date _____

Name of School Board President/Chairperson: Mrs. Jane Meier

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I - Eligibility Certification), and certify that to the best of my knowledge it is accurate.

(School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature) Date _____

**Non-Public Schools: If the information requested is not applicable, write N/A in the space.*

The original signed cover sheet only should be converted to a PDF file and emailed to Aba Kumi, Blue Ribbon Schools Project Manager (aba.kumi@ed.gov) or mailed by expedited mail or a courier mail service (such as Express Mail, FedEx or UPS) to Aba Kumi, Director, Blue Ribbon Schools Program, Office of Communications and Outreach, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Ave., SW, Room 5E103, Washington, DC 20202-8173.

PART I - ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION

12PV231

The signatures on the first page of this application certify that each of the statements below concerning the school's eligibility and compliance with U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights (OCR) requirements is true and correct.

1. The school has some configuration that includes one or more of grades K-12. (Schools on the same campus with one principal, even K-12 schools, must apply as an entire school.)
2. The school has made adequate yearly progress each year for the past two years and has not been identified by the state as "persistently dangerous" within the last two years.
3. To meet final eligibility, the school must meet the state's Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) requirement in the 2011-2012 school year. AYP must be certified by the state and all appeals resolved at least two weeks before the awards ceremony for the school to receive the award.
4. If the school includes grades 7 or higher, the school must have foreign language as a part of its curriculum and a significant number of students in grades 7 and higher must take foreign language courses.
5. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2006.
6. The nominated school has not received the Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010 or 2011.
7. The nominated school or district is not refusing OCR access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.
8. OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the school district concluding that the nominated school or the district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if OCR has accepted a corrective action plan from the district to remedy the violation.
9. The U.S. Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the nominated school or the school district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution's equal protection clause.
10. There are no findings of violations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in a U.S. Department of Education monitoring report that apply to the school or school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.

PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

12PV231

All data are the most recent year available.

DISTRICT

Questions 1 and 2 are for Public Schools only.

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

3. Category that best describes the area where the school is located: Suburban with characteristics typical of an urban area

4. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 2

5. Number of students as of October 1, 2011 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total			# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	0	0	0		6	0	0	0
K	0	0	0		7	0	0	0
1	0	0	0		8	0	0	0
2	0	0	0		9	0	141	141
3	0	0	0		10	0	171	171
4	0	0	0		11	0	139	139
5	0	0	0		12	0	155	155
Total in Applying School:								606

6. Racial/ethnic composition of the school: 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
1 % Asian
2 % Black or African American
2 % Hispanic or Latino
1 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
93 % White
1 % Two or more races
100 % Total

Only the seven standard categories should be used in reporting the racial/ethnic composition of your school. The final Guidance on Maintaining, Collecting, and Reporting Racial and Ethnic data to the U.S. Department of Education published in the October 19, 2007 *Federal Register* provides definitions for each of the seven categories.

7. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2010-2011 school year: 2%

This rate is calculated using the grid below. The answer to (6) is the mobility rate.

(1)	Number of students who transferred to the school after October 1, 2010 until the end of the school year.	4
(2)	Number of students who transferred from the school after October 1, 2010 until the end of the school year.	8
(3)	Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)].	12
(4)	Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2010	619
(5)	Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4).	0.02
(6)	Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100.	2

8. Percent of English Language Learners in the school: 0%

Total number of ELL students in the school: 2

Number of non-English languages represented: 2

Specify non-English languages: German, Italian

9. Percent of students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 5%

Total number of students who qualify: 29

If this method does not produce an accurate estimate of the percentage of students from low-income families, or the school does not participate in the free and reduced-priced school meals program, supply an accurate estimate and explain how the school calculated this estimate.

10. Percent of students receiving special education services: 1%

Total number of students served: 9

Indicate below the number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Do not add additional categories.

<u>0</u> Autism	<u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment
<u>0</u> Deafness	<u>0</u> Other Health Impaired
<u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness	<u>5</u> Specific Learning Disability
<u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance	<u>4</u> Speech or Language Impairment
<u>0</u> Hearing Impairment	<u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury
<u>0</u> Mental Retardation	<u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness
<u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities	<u>0</u> Developmentally Delayed

11. Indicate number of full-time and part-time staff members in each of the categories below:

	Number of Staff	
	<u>Full-Time</u>	<u>Part-Time</u>
Administrator(s)	<u>4</u>	<u>2</u>
Classroom teachers	<u>38</u>	<u>5</u>
Resource teachers/specialists (e.g., reading specialist, media specialist, art/music, PE teachers, etc.)	<u>2</u>	<u>4</u>
Paraprofessionals	<u>0</u>	<u>1</u>
Support staff (e.g., school secretaries, custodians, cafeteria aides, etc.)	<u>6</u>	<u>13</u>
Total number	<u>50</u>	<u>25</u>

12. Average school student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the Full Time Equivalent of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1:

15:1

13. Show daily student attendance rates. Only high schools need to supply yearly graduation rates.

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Daily student attendance	95%	94%	94%	94%	94%
High school graduation rate	92%	91%	86%	96%	92%

14. **For schools ending in grade 12 (high schools):**

Show what the students who graduated in Spring 2011 are doing as of Fall 2011.

Graduating class size:	<u>141</u>
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	<u>100%</u>
Enrolled in a community college	<u>0%</u>
Enrolled in vocational training	<u>0%</u>
Found employment	<u>0%</u>
Military service	<u>0%</u>
Other	<u>0%</u>
Total	<u>100%</u>

15. Indicate whether your school has previously received a National Blue Ribbon Schools award:

☐ No

☒ Yes

If yes, what was the year of the award? Before 2007

PART III - SUMMARY

12PV231

Notre Dame Academy (NDA) is a single gender school of 600 girls founded by the Sisters of Notre Dame (SND) in Covington, Kentucky, a suburb of Cincinnati Ohio. The majority of students come from the middle income families in the northern Kentucky area representing diocesan and public grade schools. The vision is to provide a Catholic environment of educational excellence to empower young women to bring about positive change in society. NDA strives to form persons who are skilled and committed to become catalysts for the responsible care of God's creation and for justice and peace for all. The mission to educate young women to make a difference in the world has resulted in students actively engaged in a variety of service opportunities and over 10,000 alumnae who work in careers and vocations providing service and leadership in local and regional communities. NDA offers an integrated education that promotes spiritual development and excellence in academics, service, the arts and athletics.

The academy is one of six ministries offered by the SND's. Through interactions with these other ministries including an urban education center, preschool learning center, adult care center and all girls school in Uganda, students have opportunities to be part of a larger network of education and service. This heritage has continued for over 100 years since the school opened in 1906.

In 2006, the academy implemented a new governance structure and capital campaign to ensure the ongoing success of the vision and mission into the 21st century. The school successfully transitioned from a board of advisors to a board of directors reporting to the SND Covington province. A \$12 million capital campaign added updated science labs, a fine arts complex with a state of the art theater and outdoor sports complex. The school successfully implemented a president-principal leadership model and in 2010 the first lay principal in the history of the school was hired. The SND educational heritage continues with this new model of leadership that maintains the governance role of these visionary women leaders and incorporates lay leaders into realizing the mission.

As a Catholic school, NDA is committed to the spiritual development of young women. This commitment drives the educational program and experiences available. Prayer is part of the daily life at NDA and liturgical services are held monthly. A four-year theology program includes courses in Catholicism, scripture, church history and morality. Social justice and action are promoted through a comprehensive four year service program.

Notre Dame Academy has a consistent record in educating and graduating young women who succeed at high levels academically and are committed to service. Students and graduates have been recognized at the state, national and international levels for accomplishments in science, writing, the arts, athletics, and service. NDA consistently places 98% or more of its students in colleges and universities. In the graduating class of 2011, 99% were accepted to post secondary institutions with over \$9 million awarded in scholarships. 97% of graduates qualified for the Kentucky Education Excellence Scholarships, 21 are AP scholars, two were National Merit semifinalists, two national merit commended students and one student achieved a perfect SAT Super Score. 10-12 students participate in the Commonwealth's Governor's Scholar program each year. Student success can be attributed to a dedicated faculty who promote critical thinking, collaborative learning, hands on activities and a passion for learning.

A signature academic program is the Science Research program in which students design and conduct scientific research. Last year students received 1st and 3rd place in the Kentucky Junior Science and Humanities Symposium. They represented the state of Kentucky at International Science Youth Forum, International Sustainable World Project, and the International Science and Humanities Symposium. Projects include energy and water research that address global resource challenges.

Students are consistently recognized for excellence in writing. In 2010 one student received a prestigious Overture award for Creative writing. Last year over 61 students received Scholastic Writing awards, including three national winners. This year one English classes authored children's books as part of a service learning project and read their books to children at the SND sponsored Julie Learning center. Two years ago another English class collaborated with students at the SND Uganda school on a writing project and those books are still used today.

The new fine arts facility supports the presentation of student work in visual and performing arts. Students participate at all levels of musical and dramatic productions. Musical performance opportunities include band, liturgical music, choral and select ensembles. Students exhibit artwork in college art shows and the Diocesan Art show. In 2010-11, 472 students participated in one of the 11 sports offered at NDA. This year the soccer team became the 30th NDA team to earn a state championship. In 2010, the average GPA for all student athletes was 3.5.

A. Performance Levels

Notre Dame Academy uses standardized assessments at each grade level to determine each student's progress. This starts with the incoming freshmen High School Placement Test (HSPT). Students whose score is in the top 14 are offered scholarships. Students are enrolled at NDA in college preparatory or honors classes depending on test scores and grade school performance. Those whose scores that indicate below grade level achievement are enrolled in the Excel class to address academic deficiencies and assist with a successful transition to high school.

The PLAN test is used to assess college readiness progress and provide a career inventory for sophomores. Performance on this test is considered acceptable when the majority of students are above the national 75th percentile.

Sophomores and juniors take the PSAT tests and are expected to score above the 75th national percentile. The majority of juniors and seniors take the ACT test. These scores are typically above state and national averages by 4 to 6 points on the ACT. Proficiency is indicated with ACT sub scores and composites of over 23.

NDA participates in the Association Assessment of Catechesis/Religious Education (ACRE) test sponsored by National Catholic Educational Association. This test assesses and evaluates faith knowledge and attitude towards faith development. Students are expected to be proficient at least 65-86% at best advanced at 87%. Students consistently score in the proficient to advanced ranges on this test.

Advanced Placement tests are used to assess the performance of students in AP classes and the success of these classes overall. Successful AP classes will have overall AP score averages above 3.5 with the majority scoring a 3 or better.

B. Performance Trends

Trends in PLAN, PSAT and ACT scores have shown significant consistency among the tests and over time in the last five years.

Students taking the PLAN tests in the 10th grade typically score 3-4 points above the national mean in English, math, reading and science scores. The mean for each subject area and the composite score is in the range of 20 to 21. Approximately 80% of the students are above the 50th national percentile and 50-60% above the 75th national percentile. In sub scores, NDA students are 1-3 points above the national mean with 90% in the top 50th percentile and 65% above the 75th percentile. Students exceed college readiness scores as compared to national averages in all areas. These are especially strong in English and reading with 97% at or above the college readiness benchmark in English and 85% at or above the benchmark in reading. For math, 57% were at or above the benchmark and for science 41% were at or above the benchmark.

The only subgroup that shows an achievement gap of more than 10 percentage points are African Americans which are also the largest non-white group in the student population. These students and others who score below acceptable levels would be included in the high school placement test process and placed in the Excel classes as the need is indicated. This would include a stand-alone course, resource teacher as well as remedial courses in math and English if necessary.

Student performance on the PSAT consistently exceed national norms. For the 2012 class, 44.9% met college readiness benchmarks compared to 24.7 % nationally. Students exceed national averages in critical reading, mathematics and writing. In the area of critical reading, students perform best on determining word meaning, and understanding literary elements. In math skills, students performed best on numbers and operations, geometry and measurement, problem solving and communication. In writing, students performed best managing phrases and clauses and order and relationships of sentences and paragraphs.

Performance on the ACT has been very consistent in the past five years. Composite and sub scores have exceeded national and state averages by 3-6 points. College readiness scores in all areas have also exceeded state and national averages. 35% of student met all four ACT benchmarks for college readiness compared to 16% for state and 25% for national scores. Students show the highest level of readiness in English composition, social science courses, and college algebra. College biology is the lowest but still higher than national and state readiness scores by 10 to 20 percentage points.

Students tend to score best in English and reading. The college readiness score for English composition was 97% for the 2011 graduating class. Reading scores are reflected in the college readiness score for social science as well which was 80% for the class of 2011. Math scores have ranged from 22.9 to 23.9 in the last five years, exceeding state averages by 2-4 points. This is reflected in a college readiness score of 70% for college algebra, compared to a state score of 28% and national score of 40%.

Students score well on AP tests. Out of 11 AP courses, 7 had scores that exceeded 3.5 out of 5. In AP English Composition and English Language the majority of students scored the highest scores of 4 and 5. In the 2011 graduating class, 22 students qualified as AP scholars.

2. Using Assessment Results:

High school placement test scores, as well as grade school performance and teacher recommendations, are used to place incoming students in the appropriate level classes. Students can be placed in the NDA Excel classes if they have low scores or a documented learning disability. This program provides a special class and resource teacher to assist in learning plans and strategies to help students be successful. Based on students needs and documented learning challenges reasonable accommodations are offered in learning opportunities and testing. These are coordinated with the teachers in each of the student's classes and include extended time on tests, peer mentoring, tutoring and differentiated learning. Ipads are also used to support different learning styles and paces in students. Conferences are held with each incoming student and their parent(s) to discuss test results and placement decisions.

PLAN and PSAT scores are reviewed with the faculty and within departments. Teachers are encouraged to make adjustments to content and learning strategies to address any discrepancies. PLAN and PSAT scores are considered in course placement decisions as well. The counseling office meets with parents each year to review how to interpret PLAN and PSAT scores. This meeting is part of an overall course planning session for parents and students.

ACT scores are reviewed with the faculty at the beginning of each year. Academic departments discuss ways to address needed improvements based on scores in each area. Department faculty review college readiness scores as well. Academic counselors and faculty have attended workshops on using these scores and we continue to develop ways to use this data to improve teaching and learning strategies. For the past several years NDA has sponsored ACT preparatory courses and this year the science department will offer an additional specific session on the science portion of the ACT and how to use scientific reasoning in reading data to draw conclusions. This skill is also emphasized in each of the science classes. ACT and SAT scores are reviewed with each graduating student and her parent(s) in individual college counseling sessions held by the school counselor.

The ACRE test is used to assess student content knowledge in religion courses that comprise the 4-year Didache series religion curriculum used in the schools of the Diocese. This test offers content specific measures that align with each course in the four-year program. Results from this test are used by the religion faculty to make adjustments to content and learning activities in the specific courses each year.

NDA offers 11 Advanced Placement courses. AP scores are reviewed each with the AP teachers to determine areas needed for improvement. Teachers analyze their AP scores and compare them to national percentile scores in each of the content areas for their course. Teachers attend AP workshops and update syllabi to remain current and provide sufficient preparation for students to achieve at least a 3 on their AP exams. Where needed departments review prerequisite courses to determine how these are preparing students for the AP level.

In 2009, NDA began a curriculum mapping process and followed the Backward Design methodology for curriculum planning. This has helped to connect learning outcomes and assessment results. It continues to be a developing project but has been used to look at horizontal alignment and vertical alignment for courses in each department. It has also encouraged teacher collaboration on content and learning activities to meet learning outcome targets for departments and specific courses. It is beginning to support interdepartmental collaboration as well.

NDA publishes testing data such as average ACT scores and AP student success in newsletters to parents, the local media and on our school website.

3. Sharing Lessons Learned:

NDA is a part of the school system of the Diocese of Covington. Different groups from each school meet regularly to share ideas and collaborate on activities. This includes principals, counselors and technology directors. NDA staff and faculty have shared ideas and collaborated with these groups on various issues and topics. Currently the principal is participating in a leadership program with other diocesan principals and has presented information on the school's mission and vision as well as technology initiatives and collaboration with faculty.

The diocesan technology directors are planning an in-service for all diocesan high school teachers and NDA will be the host site. This program will allow schools to share ideas about the use of technology to support best practice.

NDA collaborates regularly with Covington Catholic High School (CCH) the all-boys diocesan school located across the street. Both principals share ideas about programs and services and consult with each other on problem solving and student-parent concerns. The NDA principal was recently member of the accreditation site visit team for CCH and assisted in writing the recommendations. This also included sharing experiences with the administration about curriculum mapping. The two principals meet regularly with the diocesan feeder school principals to discuss initiatives as well as the preparedness of grade school students for the high school curriculum.

Faculty are encouraged and supported to present at conferences and workshops. Several AP teachers have served as readers for the AP test. Science teachers have presented at conferences on student research and the role of women in science. The service learning coordinator presented ideas for service learning activities to a local agency that supports such initiatives and will be consulting with NDA to implement these over the next few months.

The principal serves in a Teacher Education committee at Thomas More College. In this role she collaborates with college professors and other education specialists in selecting student candidates for internships and student teaching. This includes sharing ideas about the qualities of a successful teacher.

4. Engaging Families and Communities:

Parents and community members have been significant partners in making excellent educational and athletic opportunities available to the young women that attend NDA. Parents and community members serve on the Board of Directors and various Board committees. Many of these individuals have a long time relationship with NDA as alumnae, and former or current parents. During the last strategic planning process parents and community members were instrumental in providing feedback and developing ideas to support the long term academic and co-curricular goals of the school. They also held leadership roles in implementing the 2006 capital campaign.

Recently a group of parents and community members took the lead in completing fundraising for the track – the final phase of the soccer/track field complex. The result was a \$400,000 addition to the sports complex that provides one of the finest tracks for female high school athletes in the state and region. A group of parents have providing major renovations using donated labor and materials to the softball field. This project includes new dugouts, field upgrade and a batting cage.

Parents are involved in many other activities including student life, and development activities, recruitment and fine arts. The Parent Teacher Organization helps to support faculty and staff morale by planning social events and providing food and refreshments at faculty meetings, They also coordinate many student activities such as the mother/daughter dinner, father/daughter dance, after prom and various students socials. They recruit cafeteria volunteers as well as classroom aides for teachers. Parent committees are core members of the planning team that coordinates the annual Gala Fundraiser and the Women Making a Difference Luncheon. Many of the mothers are NDA graduates and have a long history of supporting the school in various ways.

The athletic boosters are instrumental to the success of the athletic program. Every year they coordinate a fruit sale that raises over \$70,000 for the athletic program and golf outing which raises over \$25,000. They serve as parent team leaders for each of the sports helping the coaches to coordinate team activities.

NDA offers a unique opportunity for parents that has mutual benefit for the school and its families. Through the work study program, parents who demonstrate financial need using the Private School Aid Service (PSAS) application, can work on campus in lieu of tuition. These parents provide valuable custodial and maintenance services. Some also serve as room monitors for computer labs after school. This helps to make a Catholic education affordable to all by keeping costs down and providing needed financial assistance to families who are committed to Catholic education.

1. Curriculum:

As a Catholic school, NDA's curriculum recognizes the centrality of faith as the beginning of education. Educating students to make a difference in our world requires a commitment to academic excellence and an understanding of the relevance of learning to personal action. NDA is a college preparatory school that has high expectation for academic excellence and provides a structure that challenges and supports each student in the learning process. NDA enrolls students with a wide range of abilities. A successful student is one who takes responsibility for her own learning by engaging in the learning experiences and support systems offered.

Learner outcomes reflect state and/or national standards in specific subject area and support college and career readiness. The core curriculum addresses the following learning outcomes;

- Develop critical thinking and problem solving skills
- Demonstrate ability to effectively communicate ideas
- Demonstrate proficiency in core content knowledge
- Research, analyze and synthesize data and ideas
- Apply knowledge across content areas and to real world situations
- Apply knowledge to responsible Christian citizenship

NDA students must complete four years of Theology as well as a comprehensive four-year service program that involves students in service in and out of the school day. The theology curriculum covers Catholicism, scripture, church history and morality. Courses use reflection and critical thinking to encourage personal faith formation.

The English curriculum expects students to master comprehensive communication and thinking skills needed for collegiate study. Focus is on literary analysis and writing ability.

The mathematics curriculum covers algebra, geometry, calculus, statistics, accounting and applied math. To develop logical and creative thinking, the curriculum focuses on theory and application through practice and problem solving.

Science courses stress scientific literacy, a sense of inquiry and appreciation for the complexities of the natural world. Content is supported by the ability to collect, analyze and present data through hands on learning.

Social Studies help students develop a working knowledge of the world in which she lives and her Christian responsibility to it. Content includes geography, world and U.S. history, global issues, government, economics and human psychology. Courses utilize reading, writing, research and mapping skills to develop a strong content and critical thinking skills.

The Arts seeks to instill an appreciation of creative expression in all students through vocal or instrumental music, art and design, graphic arts, and theater. Theory and application are stressed.

Individual and group student work is a central feature in performance and visual displays presented to the school and local community.

Health and physical education courses are supported by the recently added fitness center and outdoor sports complex. Courses include an awareness of the importance of physical fitness and regular exercise. Students are encouraged and taught how to maintain these.

Information technology is designed to introduce students to the use of hardware, software and online applications utilized at NDA. The librarian plays an important role in providing information about the use of technology in research and writing. The course also emphasizes the appropriate use of social media.

World languages develop a knowledge and appreciation of other people and their culture to attain broader global awareness. Students can study French, Latin, and or Spanish and are encouraged to take four years of language. Language instruction includes speaking and listening techniques, with teachers using the second language for the majority of instruction.

2. Reading/English:

Reading is emphasized throughout the curriculum. The core curriculum, and English department specifically, offer many opportunities and have high expectations to help students become proficient and excel in reading and writing.

Recognizing that effective reading skills are crucial to developing effective writing skills, reading a variety of genres is central to each English course and used in various ways to develop personal writing skills. The texts and themes chosen give the students an opportunity to share a variety of human experiences, develop their outlook and cultural standards, and help their appreciation of literature and perhaps contribute to it by their own writing. Considerable emphasis is placed on the development of English language skills, including grammar, usage, vocabulary, composition and research. Essays, based on various modes of discourse, poems, plays and short stories are part of the writing process and genre studied. Particular emphasis is placed on reading comprehension and critical thinking skills as they apply to problem solving and taking standardized tests.

All students research and write a major research paper as part of their senior year English course. Appropriate validation and citations of sources is emphasized and required. Publication courses are also available for students who wish to learn writing skills specific to various types of media. Students in those courses write the school newspaper as well as other brochures and materials used by the school.

All courses are values-based, helping student readers to recognize and empathize with the human condition as encountered in literature, history, religion, and science. As part of their reading assignments, students evaluate the cultural and communications media in the context of values consistent with their Christian beliefs. The core curriculum aims to provide learning situations and experiences in and out of class that promote cultural development rooted in the knowledge and experience of literature, music, art, and history. Many courses require that students employ critical thinking skills as well as reflect on and evaluate information in order to achieve a healthy balance in their personal lives. Journaling and writing to prompts, attending cultural events and outreach activities nurture lifelong readership and love of learning.

Students who are performing at or below grade level in reading are enrolled in the Excel program as freshman and Elements of Writing as sophomores. Utilizing individualized and differentiated instruction the focus of this program is to strengthen skills in the areas of English, Reading and Mathematics. A strong emphasis will be placed on learning styles, applying critical reading strategies, and learning problem-solving skills. The resource teacher for this course collaborates with each student's teacher as they progress through the year in the specific course.

3. Mathematics:

Math curriculum focuses on the idea that math is a tool used to develop logical and creative thinking. To that end the curriculum is designed to achieve a proper balance between theory and application through practice and problem solving. The mathematics department offers courses that utilize a variety of teaching methods to develop each student's mathematical potential.

The math program offers courses in Algebra, geometry, pre-calculus, calculus, statistics, accounting and applied math. Students who excel in math as incoming freshman can take Algebra in a special course as 8th graders and be accelerated in the curriculum taking AP Calculus as seniors. Students who perform below grade level are enrolled in the EXCEL program and will take applied math as seniors. They can also take part in the peer tutoring program. It is possible for students to change tracks through the course of four years depending on their progress.

Math courses are very interactive and employ individual and collaborative problem solving. Smartboards and online learning tools support student engagement in these classes.

Learning outcomes and instructional strategies in the math program include;

- To develop a positive attitude towards mathematics by making mathematical processes meaningful
- To develop a degree of self-confidence and self-direction
- To think and to discover mathematical relationships for themselves
- To develop an ability to reason logically
- To develop a competency in reading mathematical materials
- To express mathematical reasoning clearly when sharing answers with a small group or the class
- To present mathematical concepts in a creative and meaningful way through research and analysis
- To be proficient in the use of graphing calculators
- To gain information from and to critique graphs, charts, statistics, and other data
- To experience on-line testing and to introduce college-placement resources
- To become aware of different career choices in mathematics
- To develop an appreciation of the structure of mathematics, its contribution in the development of civilization, and the importance of mathematics in the world today
- To develop a good background for further mathematical, scientific, and technical training

4. Additional Curriculum Area:

Science

Science is one of the hallmarks of the NDA educational program. It features a science research program that engages students in self-directed scientific research, data analysis and presentations. Students who have participated in this program have received local, state, national and international awards. Typically students join this program as freshman or sophomores and it involves a special class that meets before school. Although enrollment is limited, it does affect the quality of other classes and raises expectations for performance at all levels. Participants reflect a range of abilities in other areas and are not necessarily the top performing students in all subjects.

In all science classes strong content understanding is supported by application of theory through inquiry and analysis is emphasized. The recently renovated science labs provide the necessary space and equipment to conduct hands on learning and research. Each class is held in a room that includes space to employ lecture and discussion as well as inquiry and analysis.

The science curriculum emphasizes the concept of physical science first following the belief that modern biology cannot be well understood without a solid foundation in chemistry and physics. Science courses expect students to become scientifically literate, to develop a sense of inquiry and an appreciation for the complexities of the natural world. Content is a major component for each course supported by the ability to collect, analyze and present data through hands on learning. Advanced students can take AP Biology, College Chemistry and AP/College Physics. The curriculum also includes specialized courses in anatomy and physiology, marine biology, ecology and zoology.

Learning outcomes for science courses include;

- Use the scientific method to develop careful observation, critical thinking, and problem solving skills
- Develop scientific literacy to be an informed citizen
- Appreciate the inter- relatedness of physical and biological systems
- Incorporate scientific knowledge into daily life
- Understand the science that underlies the ethical issues of our day
- Value the beauty of the natural environment and responsibly use its resources

5. Instructional Methods:

NDA stresses the importance of a learner-centered education which follows the educational philosophy of Fr. Bernard Overberg – the priest who supported the original work of the founding sisters of Notre Dame in Coesfeld Germany. This philosophy is consistent with the learning styles and needs of the 21st Century learner. The tradition of academic excellence is evidence of effective teaching and learning.

Examples of effective teaching at NDA that promote student engagement include the use of humor and personal relevance, cooperative learning activities that promoted student responsibility, Socratic method that engages learners in critical thinking and problem solving, and students learning through inquiry and problem solving. The enthusiasm of teachers is evident in their level conviction, enthusiasm, and creativity in preparing lessons.

The use of technology is central to effective teaching at NDA. This includes the use of Smart Boards, online learning tools and teacher websites. Recent improvements to the availability of technology for students and teachers reflect this commitment to using technology to support best practice. Network and connectivity have been expanded and upgraded. This year NDA instituted cloud computing to support email and online collaboration for students, teachers and staff, allowing all students to have an NDA email account to improve communication within the school community. Teachers are using hybrid version of online textbooks in Human Geography, Government and Economics, and Algebra 1 and 2. Hardback books are kept in the classroom for in class use and each student will have an interactive online text to use on their own. iPads are used in the EXCEL Classroom to pilot one to one computing and support differentiated learning. Laptops are accessible to all teachers and upgraded processors have been added to classroom computers to accommodate Office 2011 and Google Chrome.

Teachers at Notre Dame Academy use a variety of methods in assessing a student's academic progress. While traditional objective testing is still common, authentic assessments utilizing rubrics as standards are encouraged and utilized in all subject areas. Projects and presentations are features in all classes. Collaborative group work is also supported and encouraged.

Differentiated instruction is evident in several courses where teachers provide multiple forms of processing material and utilize technology to allow students to work at different paces. This is particularly true of the Excel program that supports the remediation for students who are academically challenged. This class utilizes individual learning styles, small student teacher ratios, hands on practice and peer mentoring to assist students in the learning process. Last year Ipads were purchased for this class and these are used to support writing, vocabulary, research and reading skill development.

Notre Dame Academy uses the academic levels of the different courses as a way of encouraging students to match their God given intellectual talents with appropriate course content. Courses are offered on three levels of difficulty: college preparatory, honors, and advanced placement/college.

6. Professional Development:

NDA offers a professional development program to all faculty. This includes funding as well as in-service days for education and training. Funding includes an annual allotment of \$400 for conferences and meetings. Additionally, faculty can apply for funding from a teacher education fund which would cover expenses up \$2000. These funds are typically used for out of town conferences as well as courses taken for credit. Classroom observations are used to identify potential areas for professional development. Funding is also available for AP teachers to attend AP specific workshops and programs.

Four in-service days are included in the school year including the beginning of the year. This typically includes a spiritual component to reflect on the SND principles of education and how this should affect teaching and learning. Goals and activities for the year are reviewed. Finally a topic of interest related to developing best practice is also covered. This has included topics such as curriculum mapping, Backward Design curriculum planning and assessment strategies. Last year the opening in service focused on a “pedagogy of caring” as well as learning and teaching in the 21st century. In-service days throughout the year have included professional development on technology to support best practice, service learning and curriculum mapping.

Faculty meetings are held 1-2 times per month. These usually include an educational component or time for faculty to share ideas. Departmental meetings held monthly offer time for faculty collaboration on curriculum planning and development.

Last year faculty attended an in-service on incorporating service learning into the curriculum to support the school’s service program as well as create authentic learning opportunities for students. This year classes in four different subject areas are developing service learning projects as part of their curriculum.

Curriculum mapping has been underway for the past three years. This has allowed faculty to document, reflect on and continue to improve their lesson planning and pedagogy. New faculty have been able to access these maps to develop their lesson plans. Departments have utilized these to evaluate horizontal and vertical alignment.

Faculty development has supported many recent initiatives including increased use of technology to support best practice, curriculum mapping, service learning, AP instruction, student writing and scientific research.

7. School Leadership:

Notre Dame Academy is governed by the Sister of Notre Dame, Covington Province. A Board of Directors serves as a policy making body, provides oversight and reports to the SND’s. The school is affiliated with the Diocese of Covington and employees are on the diocesan payroll, however the SND’s are the governing body. In 2006, the academy adopted a President Principal model of shared leadership. The president is responsible for the Advancement, Marketing and Financial oversight of the school. The

principal is the instructional leader, chief catechist and responsible for the day-to-day operations of the school.

The principal works with a Director of Student Life and Director of Instructional Technology to manage the educational and co-curricular programs. Academic departments are led by department chairs who report to the principal. The principal promotes collaboration by utilizing a committee structure to plan, coordinate and implement programs. These committees include Academic Chairs, School Improvement, Campus Ministry, Admissions and Retention, Technology Advancement and Student Leadership. Each of these committees reviews, proposes and implements policy based on the mission and vision of the school and promotes the development of the whole person; spiritually, academically, socially and physically. Annual school goals addressing continuous improvement in student achievement, curriculum and programs determine individual committee goals.

Policy proposals or changes would be considered at committee level, presented to the principal for approval and submitted to the President and Board of Directors to become officially adopted. Currently the Student Handbook is being reviewed by a committee led by the Director of Student Life. Faculty, parents and students are participants. Policy changes will be reviewed by the principal and presented to the Board for adoption.

The Department Chair Committee meets regularly to discuss academic issues and concerns. They serve as a communication conduit to faculty in each of their departments regarding important initiatives, events and updates.

The School Improvement Committee reviews the follow up from the last accreditation visit, collects feedback from faculty and students and makes recommendations to and monitors the school improvement plan.

In 2012, NDA will complete a strategic plan as well as the accreditation process to renew its accreditation status through AdvancEd. The president and principal have already been meeting with consultants from Xavier University to implement the strategic planning process. The principal will take the lead in the accreditation review and recently attended a summit sponsored by the University of Kentucky to prepare for the review and site visit.

PART VI - PRIVATE SCHOOL ADDENDUM

12PV231

1. Private school association: Catholic

2. Does the school have nonprofit, tax-exempt (501(c)(3) status? Yes

3. What are the 2011-2012 tuition rates, by grade? (Do not include room, board, or fees.)

<u>\$</u>	<u>\$</u>	<u>\$</u>	<u>\$</u>	<u>\$</u>	<u>\$</u>
K	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th
<u>\$</u>	<u>\$</u>	<u>\$</u>	<u>\$5700</u>	<u>\$5700</u>	<u>\$5700</u>
6th	7th	8th	9th	10th	11th
<u>\$5700</u>	<u>\$</u>				
12th	Other				

4. What is the educational cost per student? (School budget divided by enrollment) \$6544

5. What is the average financial aid per student? \$3285

6. What percentage of the annual budget is devoted to scholarship assistance and/or tuition reduction?
20%

7. What percentage of the student body receives scholarship assistance, including tuition reduction? 26%

PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

NATIONAL NORMS-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 12

Test: ACT

Edition/Publication Year: NA Publisher: College Board Scores reported as: Scaled scores

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month	Jun	Jun	Jun	Jun	Jun
SCHOOL SCORES					
Average Score	24	23	23	24	24
Number of students tested	144	133	144	140	150
Percent of total students tested	94	95	97	97	97
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
2. African American Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
5. English Language Learner Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
6.					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
NOTES:					

12PV231

NATIONAL NORMS-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading

Grade: 12

Test: ACT

Edition/Publication Year: NA Publisher: College Board Scores reported as: Scaled scores

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month	Jun	Jun	Jun	Jun	Jun
SCHOOL SCORES					
Average Score	25	25	25	25	24
Number of students tested	144	133	140	140	150
Percent of total students tested	94	95	97	97	97
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
2. African American Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
5. English Language Learner Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
6.					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
NOTES:					

12PV231